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DIRECTIONS

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YOUNG STUDENTS

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DIRECTIONS

FOR

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DIVINITY.

DIRECTIONS

FOR

H Owen (Hb.)
YOUNG STUDENTS

IN

DIVINITY,

WITH REGARD TO

Those Attainments, which are necessary to
qualify them for HOLY ORDERS.

(by Henry Owen)

THE SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN RIVINGTON, Bookseller to the
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at N^o 62, in St Paul's Church-yard.

M DCC LXXIII.

DIRECTIONS

FOR

YOUNG STUDENTS

IN

DIVINITY

WITH A PREFACE

TO THE READER BY THE AUTHOR



THE SECOND EDITION

LONDON

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and Ireland

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TO THE

HONOURABLE AND RIGHT REVEREND

Shute Barrington, LL.D.

Lord Bishop of LANDAFF.

MY LORD,

THE favourable regard, which your Lordship is naturally disposed to entertain for all such attempts, as have any tendency to promote the interest of Religion, inclines me to believe that the following Tract will not be altogether unacceptable to You. The professed design of it is to

assist those, who are destined for the Church, in the acquisition of the necessary accomplishments: and I hope it will be found of some service in that respect. In another respect I wish it to be considered, as a small token of the Gratitude and Reverence, with which I am,

MY LORD,

YOUR LORDSHIP'S

most obedient

Servant and Chaplain,

5 DEC 60

HENRY OWEN.

P R E F A C E.

THESE Directions, extracted chiefly from the writings of our best Divines, are more particularly intended for the use of those, who have not the advantage of *University* education; but are left to themselves, to form their morals, and conduct their studies, just as they may.—And to such, it is hoped, they will be of so much service, provided they are strictly followed, as to make them, when they come for ORDERS, Candidates “that need not be
“ ashamed.”

It may be thought, perhaps, that I have paid too little attention to their circumstances in the number of books recommended to their perusal. But *some* of these books they can certainly buy : and the *rest*, I presume, they will be able to borrow : For I have that opinion of our Clergy in general—and especially of the most able of them,—that they will not only be ready to lend a Student any books he may have occasion for ; but also to give him proper instructions, how to study them to the best advantage.

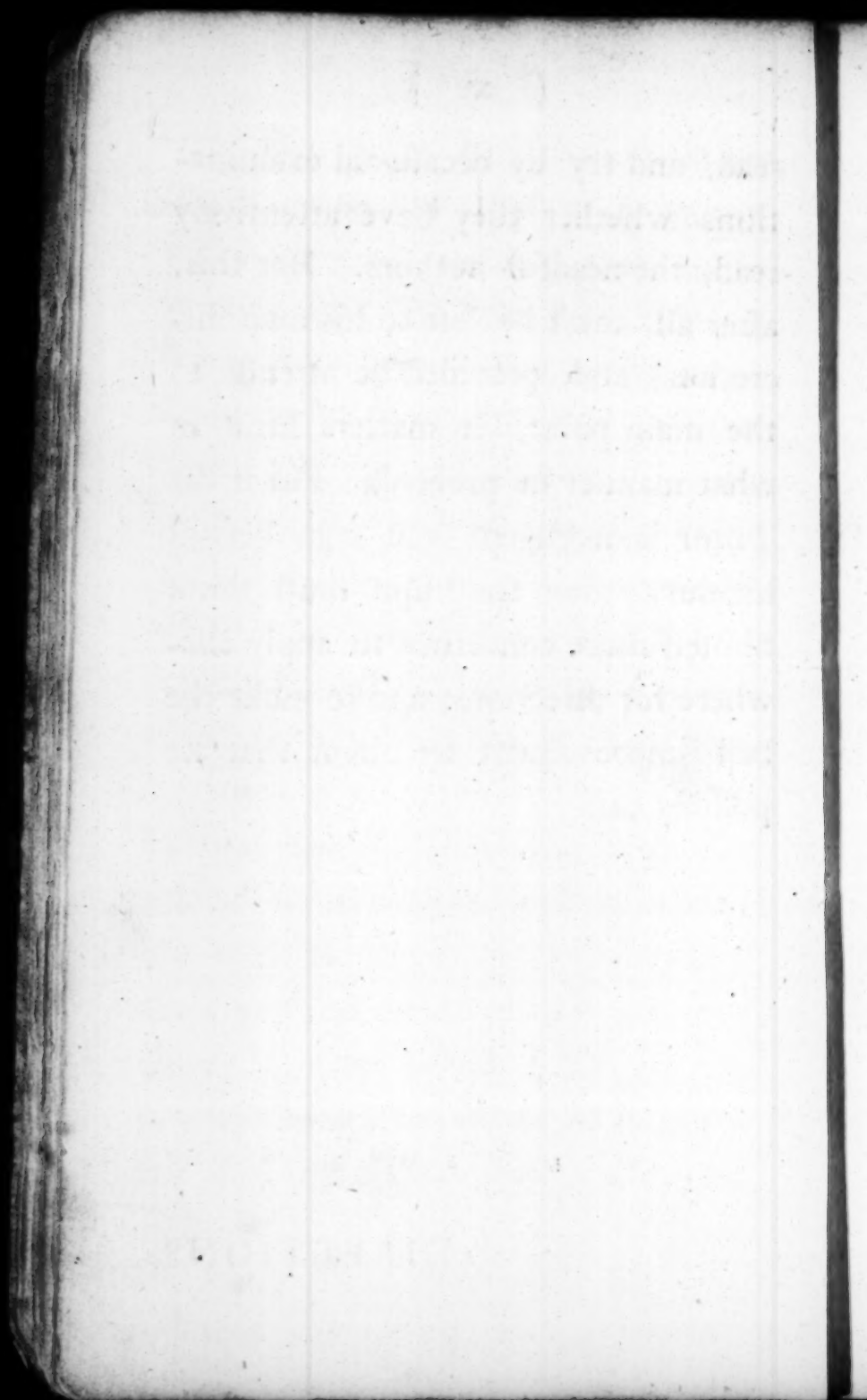
As for those, who have the happiness of being educated in one of our Universities, I leave them to be directed in the order of their studies by their respective Tutors ; who may, probably,

bly, give them better rules, and point out to them better books, than I have done. Far be it from me to prescribe to such, and to interfere improperly in their education. Let me however be allowed to request, for the sake of Christ, and his Church,—that both Pupils and Tutors would seriously consider, what the great end of education is. Principles of religion and virtue are of more importance to all persons, than any thing else can be. And the main point in the instruction of persons for holy *Orders*, is to qualify them for teachers of religion and virtue. If they are likely to stay long in College, classics, latin compositions, mathematics, natural philosophy, &c. will both be ornamental and useful: yet only in a lower degree, even to them. And

were they to be taught these things chiefly, with but little of scriptural and theological learning, they would be very unfit for their future profession. But those, whose residence is likely to be short, and that perhaps interrupted by considerable absences, ought to be employed almost entirely in the acquisition of that knowledge which is most necessary—and if a more confined course of study were contrived on purpose for them, it might perhaps be the more profitable to them. In some places, Tutors may be appropriated to *them* only: and in others, one who has Pupils of various sorts, may, without much trouble extraordinary, greatly benefit a few of the lowest, though he were not to do a vast deal more than appoint them to
read

read, and try by occasional examinations whether they have attentively read, the needful authors. But this, after all, must be left to his own discretion ; and, provided he attends to the main point, it matters little in what manner he proceeds. But if the Tutor is negligent and regardless of his duty, then the Pupil must think himself more concerned to apply elsewhere for directions, and to make the best improvement by them that he possibly can.

DIRECTIONS





D I R E C T I O N S
F O R
Y O U N G S T U D E N T S, &c.

“ H ” E that is desirous of the Cleri-
“ rical Office, is desirous of an
“ high and honourable Employ-
“ ment.” This is apparent
both from the nature of the Office itself;
and from the great value that is set upon it
in

^a 1 Tim. iii. 1.

in Scripture. For the Scripture dignifies it with eminent titles and high encomiums : and the nature of it plainly shews, that it is as far superior to all other Professions, as the soul is superior to the body. For other Professions relate only to the concerns of the body for the short term of its mortal state ; whereas this is employed in promoting the welfare and happiness of the soul through the endless ages of eternity,

AND yet, with regard to these inferior Professions, it is well known and universally acknowledged, that they can never be carried on with any tolerable success, unless the persons engaged in them are duly qualified by previous instruction to exercise and discharge them properly. And accordingly, they, who make pretensions to them, are indispensably obliged to be at much pains to learn them, before they presume to act therein, and enter on the practice of them.

BUT if a long course of study and application be so necessary to those Professions which relate only to men's fortunes or their persons ; nay, if every mechanical Art or
manual

manual Occupation requires the instruction of several years, before one comes to be perfect master of it; shall the noblest and most important Profession,—that which relates to men's souls, and their eternal state,—that which God has honoured so highly, and which is employed in the sublimest exercises;—shall this Profession, I say, be esteemed at so low a rate, that a much less degree of time and study should be judged sufficient to prepare us for it, than is commonly required to the meanest Trade that a man can exercise? Surely it is impossible. For the slightest reflection will serve to convince us, that so eminent an Employ naturally calls for eminent endowments; and justly demands a proportioned measure of worth and abilities in those who are admitted into the administration of it. And this conviction, once wrought, will powerfully incite those, whom it particularly concerns, to prepare themselves with all diligence for so weighty a vocation. The more highly they think of the Office, the more care they will employ in forming themselves to it. And when they duly consider its real importance, they will see and feel
how

how imperfectly the best-prepared are qualified to do it justice.

DUE qualifications being therefore necessary, let us now inquire what those qualifications are, which every person should be possessed of, who is fit to be a Candidate for HOLY ORDERS.

THESE qualifications are of two sorts—the one relates to those MORAL DISPOSITIONS, which are necessary to engage him in a regular course of piety and virtue: the other to those LITERARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS, which are necessary to enable him to discharge his office with effect and propriety.

BOTH these are necessary; and especially the first. For good principles, and virtuous dispositions, are so essential to this Profession, that all its offices, and all its duties manifestly imply and presuppose them. In other Professions, the case is different. A person may be a good lawyer or a good physician, though his morals are bad: for the proper exercise of their employment depends chiefly on the understanding. But a good parish-minister must be a good man: for

for the work of his Profession, is the work of a heart devoted to God, and influenced by the Spirit of holiness.

HE therefore, who intends to dedicate himself to the service of the Church, ought, from the time he forms that intention, to watch over his conduct with peculiar care, and practise a becoming decency of behaviour. He should cautiously avoid all unsuitable sports, gayeties and levities; and strictly confine himself to a modest plainness of dress, as well as a discreet sobriety of conversation. And this it concerns him the more to observe, because otherwise he may contract such wrong habits in his younger years, as will make lasting impressions on himself, and sink his character in the opinion of others; both which must needs obstruct, in the course of things, the good effects of his future ministry.

BUT, to bring his actions to a due degree of outward regularity, he must be careful to adjust their internal springs;
 “ to keep his heart, from whence proceed
 “ the issues of life, with all diligence^b,”
 and

^b Prov. iv. 23.

and to manage his affections in such a manner as to engage them on the side of virtue. For, until his heart is fixed aright, and his affections close in with his duty, his conduct will be necessarily wavering and irregular; and his goodness, like the morning cloud, liable to be dispersed by every gust of passion.

IN order therefore to purify his heart, and improve his mind to a right temper, he should make it his business, among other things, to meditate frequently, and with great seriousness, on the truth and excellence of the Christian Religion; on the honour that is due to the divine Majesty; on the value and dignity of our immortal Souls; and on the vast importance of the pastoral Office. Such meditations will kindle in his breast an ardent affection for heavenly things; and impress on his soul a just sense of that great trust, which is committed to those who are set apart for this sacred function.

AND that he may be the more at liberty, as well as better disposed, to attend to this trust, he should endeavour betimes to correct

rect and subdue those appetites and passions, that would draw him to the pursuit of sensual enjoyments; or tie him down too closely to the world, and render him covetous of its riches or honours. He should consider, that, when he becomes a *Clergyman*, he professedly renounces all secular business and worldly concerns; and, having taken the Lord for his portion and inheritance, should be no longer solicitous about the things of this life; but, confiding in the providence of God for his support, should give himself wholly to the duties of his function: sure, if he does so, to find the comfort of it even in this world; which he may look upon as the pledge of that eternal recompence that awaits his fidelity in the other.

If he still retains any low desires, contrary to that exalted spirit, that should actuate a good minister, let him conscientiously appropriate certain days to a stricter course of **FASTING** and **PRAYER**,—adding to the general form of his devotion a particular and earnest supplication for the increase of those christian graces,
in

in which he finds himself to be most defective.

AT these times of devout retirement, he would do well to reflect, that the Religion, which he is to teach, calls all its professors to great piety and virtue,—to probity and innocence of manners,—to meekness and gentleness,—to humility and self-denial,—to a just contempt of the world, and a proper concern for heavenly things,—to a firm reliance on the goodness of God, and cheerful submission to his wise disposals; in hopes of attaining that glorious reward, which is promised to the righteous in another state.

THESE then, being the virtues and graces, which a preacher of the Gospel is to inculcate continually on the minds of his hearers; how requisite is it, that he should be first himself well advanced and confirmed in them? and be able to shew, out of a good conversation, that the love of God is rooted in his heart? For with what face can he presume to instruct his people, and exhort them to the practice of these virtues, unless he

he is himself in a tolerable degree actually possessed of them?

INDEED, for a man to be tied down to such an employment, when he has not an inward conformity to it, is no less uncomfortable, than it is unbecoming. He is often obliged to perform offices, and to pronounce discourses, which must be not only unpleasant, but even irksome and grievous to him. The very prayers he reads reproach him to his face: and in every exhortation delivered to others, he passes sentence upon himself. Whenever he is engaged in these acts (and he cannot be long together disengaged from them) he must often feel secret challenges and compunctions within: And though he strives as often to silence and suppress them, yet they will revive, harass his mind, and keep him in perpetual uneasiness. He may indeed, by a lifeless formality, and a careless method of performing these duties, become in time so callous and insensible, as not to be affected by them. But this, if it settles the peace of his mind by stupifying his powers, will put him also, dreadful thought! so far out of the reach of conviction,

viſtion, that it will be ſcarce poſſible he ſhould ever be awakened. In this hardened ſtate, his ſins will daily increaſe upon him, —fraught with the higheſt aggravations; as being committed againſt knowledge, and againſt vows; and in direct oppoſition to the whole tenour of his profeſſion. They will carry in them a deliberate contempt of all the truths and obligations of religion; and conſequently ſubject him to that ſevere puniſhment, which is due to one, who, in the moſt daring manner, “ has trodden
 “ under foot the Son of GOD; and counted
 “ the blood of the covenant, wherewith he
 “ was ſanctified, an unholy thing; and
 “ done deſpite unto the Spirit of grace.”

NAY, he will not only be answerable for his own ſins, manifold and heinous as they are; but alſo for the ſins of all thoſe who periſh by his negligence or ill-example. And, good GOD! what a croud of miſeries, what an abyſs of deſpair, muſt ſurround and overwhelm ſuch a perſon at the hour of death?—when, beſides the clamours of his own conſcience for his private tranſgreſſions, all the ſouls whom he has neglected,

* Heb. x. 29.

neglected, or perhaps supplied with an occasion of sinning, join in crying out for vengeance against him. And what restitution, what reparation, will he be able to make? what answer can he return to his Lord, who will require these souls at his hands; and fatally convince him, that the scandal he has given, contributed to destroy and ruin those, whom it was his duty to have saved; that his negligence and irregularities have rendered void the merit of the cross,—the force and efficacy of a Redeemer?

THIS is a subject of serious reflection to every one that designs to enter into *Orders*: and if he reflects upon it with the attention he ought, he will undoubtedly resolve not to accomplish such a design, till he feels within himself those good inclinations, which may afford him a reasonable and well-grounded hope, that, by the concurring assistance of divine grace, he shall faithfully perform the duties of his function, and be an example of virtue to all around him.

OUR

OUR Religion, it should be remembered, was originally propagated and established in the world by the zeal, vigilance, and piety of its *first* Teachers; and the practice of it at this time can be no otherwise enforced and maintained, than by the strenuous exertion of the same good qualities in its *present* Ministers.

HE therefore that intends to make one of the number, and is on the point of being admitted into the pastoral Office, should examine himself with great strictness, and carefully consult his own dispositions — whether he has that warm zeal for the glory of God, and the honour of his Religion; that tender concern for the welfare of mens souls; that earnest desire of promoting the cause and interest of virtue, that were so remarkable in his primitive predecessors: — whether he has that soft and gentle, that meek and humble, that charitable and benevolent temper, which the Gospel is adapted to inspire; which shone so bright through the whole life of the blessed Author of it; which he has so
singularly

singularly recommended to the ministers of his word; and which serve likewise to recommend *them*, and the doctrines they preach, with peculiar advantage, to the acceptance of the world.

If he is thus disposed, he may take comfort to himself, as being likely to prove an useful labourer in the vineyard of Christ. For men of such dispositions will, with a moderate share of learning, do great service in the places where they are fixed. Their good qualities will derive respect on themselves; and their good examples will spread their influence among the people. Every thing they say or do will carry its weight along with it. The plainest Discourses they make will have something affecting in them; and, coming from those, who themselves do what they teach, will prevail on others to “go and do likewise^d.”

WHEREAS, on the contrary, a person of the most eminent learning, but unhappily devoid of these pious dispositions, is likely to do more harm than good. For unsanctified knowledge is very apt to puff up the mind, and render its possessor vain

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and

^d Luke x. 37.

and insolent. And where a minister is proud and haughty; rigid, impatient, or peevish in his deportment, he makes his life, for the most part, uncomfortable to himself; and his labours, how valuable soever in other respects, unacceptable and useless to his people.

THERE is a certain propriety of conduct, founded on christian prudence, which every Clergyman should be careful to observe, who would uphold and maintain his usefulness and authority. And he that is determined to shew in his behaviour a due regard to this rule, must arm himself with patience and fortitude. Sensible of the hardships and trials that await him, he must be prepared to bear with the infirmities of the weak, and to endure the calumnies and injuries of the wicked. He must bring himself down to such a truly meek and lowly temper, that “ when he is reviled, he may not be prompted to revile
“ again; when he suffers, may not threaten
“ revenge; but with resigned confidence
“ commit himself to HIM that judgeth
“ righteously.”

THIS

THIS is not only the most effectual method to overcome the prejudices of the irreligious, and the ill-will of his personal enemies ; but also to conciliate their affections, and to gain them at last into the number of his friends. For though they may despise him for a time, as a man of mean and abject spirit ; yet when they see that his behaviour flows from a principle of benevolence, and is conducted throughout by a goodness of heart, they will be induced so far to alter their opinion, as to “ think him worthy of double honour ^f.”

A PERSON of this disposition will affect no singularities. His conduct will be open, humble, and benevolent. He will never attempt to lessen the value that is due to others, with a design to increase his own. The modest opinion he has of himself, will neither suffer him to *push* for preferment, nor to envy those who are preferred. He will be content to wait, till GOD, in his providence, thinks fit to raise him ; and when he is raised, will be more solicitous about the duties of his cure, than the profits of the living. In short, he will be easy and happy in whatever station he is placed.

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^f 1 Tim. v. 17.

placed in the church ; and, by the faithful discharge of the duties of that station, will render the church happy in him.

SUCH is the frame and temper of mind to which every one should form himself, before he enters on the Pastoral Office. And though I will not affirm, that no man is fit to be admitted into *Orders*, who does not possess this christian temper in that degree of perfection I have described ; yet this I may confidently affirm, that he, who has not the seeds of it implanted in him—who has not these principles fixed in his heart, and resolutions formed to pursue and improve them — is in no wise qualified for so sacred a function : for he can in no wise answer, with truth and a safe conscience, that “ he trusts he is inwardly moved by “ the Holy Ghost to undertake that Office : ” Words which evidently imply, that he humbly believes himself to be possessed in a competent degree of those requisite pious dispositions, which can proceed only from the divine Spirit.

THESE dispositions then he must by all means labour to attain. And in order to attain them, he must diligently examine his

his natural temper, and his course of behaviour in all respects. He must observe how far, and in what instances, they deviate from the right; and then apply all his endeavours to correct and reform them. He may find some useful directions to this purpose in MASON's Treatise on *Self-knowledge*. The works of the Heathen moralists, if read with care and judgment, may contribute greatly to the same end.

TULLY's *Offices* will furnish him with great plenty of excellent rules for the conduct of life; and his *Philosophical Discourses* cannot fail of giving the mind a noble turn, and inspiring it with a relish for sublime speculations.

PLUTARCH's and SENECA's *Morals* are also good and useful in their kind; though the works of EPICTETUS and MARCUS ANTONINUS are more instructive—provided the reader stands upon his guard, and warily rejects the impious absurdities of Stoicism.

SOME of the books taught at schools may now be read again with profit. For the *Satires* of HORACE, JUVENAL and PERSIUS, contain, amidst a number of dangerous faults,

faults, several passages worthy of admiration—excellently calculated to excite in the mind a disgust and abhorrence of some current vices, and a thorough contempt of the present fashionable modes of living.

BUT of all the productions of heathen antiquity, XENOPHON'S *Memoirs of SOCRATES* deserve to be read the oftenest. This Book contains a noble system* of morality, exemplified in the life of the greatest Philosopher, that ever appeared in the Gentile world.

BUT all the Philosophers had their defects: and therefore, together with the study of these authors, carried on in such a manner as to imbibe the spirit of what is good in them, our intended Divine must apply himself, with still greater diligence, to the works of Christian writers.

OF these there is a large choice: but it may be sufficient to mention the few following,

* This discovery of its being a *System*, I owe to my friend Dr EDWARDS, Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford—from whom I received it several years ago; and to whom I ought to have made my acknowledgment in the former impression of this Treatise.

ing, which may be purchased at an easy rate.

MORE'S OF WHITBY'S *Ethicks*.

PUFFENDORF *de Off. Hom. et Civis*. Ed.
JOHNSON.

The Great Importance of a Religious Life.

NELSON'S *Practice of True Devotion*, and
his Companion for the Festivals, &c.

SCOUGAL'S *Life of God in the Soul of Man.*

The Whole Duty of Man.

TAYLOR'S *Holy Living and Dying*.

SCOTT'S *Christian Life*. And,

LAW'S *Serious Call to a devout and holy Life*.

BUT of all books, the HOLY SCRIPTURES are the most "profitable both for correction " and instruction in righteousness^b:" and therefore he should read them carefully, get as much as he can of those portions that relate to morals by heart, and repeat them often to himself: particularly some of the most instructive and pathetic *Psalms*; our

B. 4

Saviour's

^b 2 Tim. iii. 16.

Saviour's Sermon on the Mount; and the most comprehensive passages in the *Epistles*. By reflecting and meditating on these portions of *holy writ*, he will not only store his memory with noble truths, but settle in his heart right practical apprehensions.

THE book of *Proverbs*, the *Wisdom of SOLOMON*, and of the *Son of SIRACH*, will supply him with abundance of useful maxims for the regulation of life: and *Ecclesiastes* will help him to form a just and true estimate of the world; and to distinguish the objects that are of real worth from those that shine with a false lustre.

IN this way he will be sure to reap many and great advantages: and among the rest, the special advantage of knowing himself. For by the frequent perusal of the books here mentioned; by the relish he hath of them; by the delight they afford, and the effects they produce; he will plainly perceive the disposition of his soul—whether he is yet fitted for so sacred a function; and touched with such a sense of religion, as to be capable of dedicating himself to it: Which is the *first* branch of the preparation necessary before *Orders*.

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THE *other* branch of it relates to the Knowledge and Theological learning, that are necessary to qualify him for the due discharge of the several parts of his Office.

AND here, as it will become one great part of his Office to instruct the people committed to his charge; so it were ardently to be wished, that he might first be completely instructed himself; furnished with such a plentiful measure of divine knowledge, as to
 “ be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort
 “ his hearers, and to confute gainfayers ‘.’”

HOWEVER, as it is not to be expected, that ALL should be endowed with such a share of learning; and experience assures us, that a man of piety may, with much lower abilities, do great service in the church of God; therefore, though we earnestly recommend to every one the attainment of as much useful knowledge of this kind as can be had, yet we shall specify no other degrees of it, than are indispensably requisite in every minister to promote the welfare and improvement of his flock, as well as to secure his own reputation.

To this purpose then he must gain, in the first place, a competent knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, with which it is to be supposed he has already some acquaintance. But before he goes on to improve it by a more particular application, it would be advisable for him to settle in his mind a distinct idea, especially of the historical parts, by the use of some such book as Dr WATTS'S *Short View of the Whole Scripture History*: and then, to prepare himself further for this important undertaking, let him carefully peruse Mr LOWTH'S *Directions for the profitable Reading of the Holy Scriptures*. Afterwards, he may begin to read the Old Testament with a view of being able not only to discover the special propriety of the various Dispensations therein recorded, as they regard the different ages of the world; but also to perceive their general subserviency towards the introduction of that grand scheme of salvation, which was to be accomplished by JESUS CHRIST*. And that he may the more easily trace the rise, progress, and tendency of these wonderful Dispensations, let him read the books, and particularly the Prophets, not in the

* On this Subject let him consult Dr WATTS'S *Harmony of all the Religions which God ever prescribed.*

the order in which they stand at present in our Bibles, but in the order of time in which they were originally written. SHUCKFORD'S and PRIDEAUX'S *Connections*, &c. will point out that order to him; and lead him at the same time to a sufficient knowledge of the several subjects,—or BEDFORD'S *Chronology* may perhaps do as well.

IF he cannot procure these books, let him attend to the chronological *Dates* inserted in the margin of our common Bibles, which will serve in some measure to supply their place.

THE best general Commentators on the Old Testament are GROTIUS, LE CLERC, PATRICK and LOWTH. To these Commentaries may be added WELLS'S *Geography of the Old Testament*, as a book very necessary to the right understanding of the historical parts.

WITH regard to the *New Testament* it behoves him to study it with still greater diligence. This is the text of our religion; that which we preach and explain to others; and therefore it should be well understood by ourselves. Now the way for him to understand it well, is to read it often in the
original

original *Greek*; attending chiefly, for the first and second time, to the Grammatical construction of the language; and consulting, where he meets with a difficult word, either LEUSDEN'S *Compendium*, or PASOR'S *Lexicon*. When he is perfect in the language, let him read the GOSPELS carefully over in the order in which they stand, having recourse for the situation of the places mentioned to WELLS'S *Geography of the New Testament*. If he reads with attention, he will easily perceive, that in each Gospel transactions are connected, which happened in *distant* places; and consequently conclude, that several things must have intervened which are not there recorded. Now, what one Evangelist omitted, another has often supplied: and therefore, if he reads the GOSPELS over again according to the natural order of *time*, he will not only find those vacant interstices completely filled up; but also the facts, that are repeatedly mentioned, placed in a fuller and clearer light. MACKNIGHT'S *Harmony* is an excellent guide in this respect.

HENCE let him proceed to the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES; which he should carefully read, and attend to, not only as an important history, but as the *grand Key to St Paul's*

Epistles. Lord BARRINGTON's *Miscellaneous Sacra*, Edit. 2^d. and Dr BENSON's *History of the Plantation of Christianity*, will help him much in this part of his study. To which I would add Mr BRISCOE's *Boyle's Lectures*.

IF he comes to the EPISTLES with this key, and reads them in the order in which they were written; he will find them, upon the whole, much easier to be understood, than they are generally represented. Difficulties indeed he will still meet with in them: but when any difficult passage occurs, let some book of *Annotations* or *Paraphrase* be occasionally consulted upon it. Among the *Commentators*, GROTIUS, HAMMOND, and WHITBY, are the most esteemed: And among the *Paraphrasts*, CLARKE and PYLE; though perhaps DODDRIDGE's *Family Expositor* is better calculated for the improvement of a young Divine, not only as he translates the text more accurately, and explains it in his paraphrase more fully and justly, but also as he exhibits the *practical Inferences* which naturally result from it.

THERE is a small Treatise, entitled, *A KEY to the NEW TESTAMENT*, which I would earnestly recommend to all those,
who

who are entering on the study of this sacred volume. For as it exhibits the *Contents*, shews the *Design*, and fixes the *Dates* of the several Books, it must be of course a kind of Commentary; and may frequently supersede the want of any other.

AND indeed, when these Points, *viz.* the Design, Dates, &c. of the several Books of the *New Testament* are known; I would by no means advise the Student, though Commentaries are at hand, to run hastily to them, till he has first tried what may be done by comparing one text with another. For as Scripture is the best interpreter of Scripture; so the frequent reading of it, till its style and spirit become familiar to him, and the comparing particular passages with others of the like nature and tendency, will appear, upon trial, to be the best method that he can possibly take to come at the knowledge of it. And if he has patience and resolution enough to proceed and persevere in this way, though he may go on but slowly, yet he will go on surely; and find himself in the end a far greater proficient, than those, who, neglecting this method, shall betake themselves wholly to assistances of other kinds.

THIS

THIS I mention for the benefit and encouragement of Students in general; but would apply it particularly to the case of those, who by the narrowness of their circumstances are deprived of the advantage of an University-education: many of whom, when they come for *Orders*, are found upon examination to be strangely deficient in sacred knowledge: which defect they commonly attribute to their want of Expositors. Now, though Books of *Exposition* may be very useful, and even necessary on some particular occasions; yet this is certain, that no person, who is possessed of a Bible with good *marginal References*, and has not at least a competent knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, can fairly charge his want of knowledge on the want of books: on the contrary, it can be the want of nothing but industry and application in the use of those means, which he has in his hands.

WHEN our Student has acquired a general notion of the Christian religion, and especially of the nature and terms of our redemption, which he will find explained in WELLS's *Treatise of Divine Laws and Covenants*; he must then take a more particular view of its various parts; and diligently

gently study those several articles of it, which relate both to *Faith* and *Practice*. These have been already collected together, disposed under proper heads, and delivered in the words of Scripture, by Bishop GASTRELL, in his *Christian Institutes*; and are fully explained and enforced by those who have written either on the whole, or any part of our *Church Catechism*;—such as

Bishop PEARSON *on the Creed*.

Archbishop WAKE *on the Church Catechism*. And,

Archbishop SECKER's *Catechetical Lectures*; which contain a Body of Divinity, and may stand in the place of all others.

WHEN he is advanced thus far, it will be time for him to consider the doctrine of the church, delivered in the Homilies and Thirty-nine Articles. These Articles of religion, as he will afterwards be required to subscribe them, should be carefully studied, and well weighed. Bishop BURNET's *Exposition* will afford him herein great assistance; and, at the same time that it explains to him the points more immediately under
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consideration, may throw light on some others, which he did not so well understand before.

WELCHMAN'S is likewise an useful book on the same subject. He confirms every point of doctrine by apposite texts of Scripture, and short extracts from the primitive Fathers; referring the reader all along to some of the most approved modern writers for fuller explanation.

THESE books, well read and digested, will give a man an entire view of the whole body of divinity; and sufficiently qualify him to instruct the people, committed to his care, in all the great TRUTHS of Christianity.

BUT it will be also his duty to guard them from ERRORS. And therefore, since the captious spirit of *Scepticism* and *Infidelity* spreads and prevails so much among us, the proofs of our Faith, and the solutions of the principal objections against it, must be well fixed in his mind, and ready for use when occasion requires. Bishop WILKINS'S book on *Natural Religion* will lead him in
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the first steps; WOLLASTON's will carry him farther; and Dr CLARKE's on the *Being and Attributes of God*, &c. will furnish him with answers to the chief objections that have been made to Religion, natural and revealed. GROTIUS on *the Truth of the Christian Religion*, with LE CLERC's *Notes*, he should also read, and in a manner get by heart: and then he will be able to understand with ease, what is farther advanced in Dr JENKIN's *Reasonableness of Christianity*, to the same purpose.

THE whole controversy with Atheists and Deists is clearly opened, with a vast variety of learning and reasoning, by Bishop STILLINGFLEET in his *Origines Sacrae*; and has since been carried on with equal advantage by the learned Preachers of BOYLE's Lectures. If these books, which are voluminous, cannot be had, LELAND's *View of the Deistical Writers* may in some measure supply their place. Bishop GIBSON's *Pastoral Letters* contain a clear and excellent summary of the arguments in defence of the Gospel-revelation, as well as a powerful preservative against the writings, that favour the cause of Infidelity.

THE attempts and encroachments of Popish emissaries may make it necessary that our intended Divine should be tolerably acquainted with the principles of the Reformation, and the controversies we have since maintained with the church of *Rome*. Bishop BURNET's *Abridgment of his own History of the Reformation*, will give him sufficient light into the one; and Dr TRAPP's *Discourses against Popery*, into the other. If he has leisure, let him also read CHILLINGWORTH.

HOOKE's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, and the *London Cases* in three volumes 8vo, or the Abridgment of them by Dr BENNET, will furnish him with answers to the principal objections that have been raised by Dissenters against the Ceremonies and Discipline of our Church.

At the same time that he goes through these studies, he must endeavour to acquire a right notion of *Preaching*: and he will be greatly assisted in forming such a notion by an attentive perusal of the best Sermons.

Archbishop TILLOTSON's,
Archbishop SHARP's,
Bishop ATTERBURY's, and
Bishop SHERLOCK's,

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Are all excellent in different ways; though he will find no where, perhaps, a nobler specimen of *practical* preaching, (adapted to the circumstances of the congregation, delivered with a becoming freedom, and pressed home on the heart,) than is to be met with in the Sermons of the late Archbishop SECKER. There is indeed a vast variety of other Sermons, which may be read over with great advantage. And if he would make it a rule to himself to read every Sunday two Sermons of any good preacher; turn them over a little in his thoughts; and then set down their principal contents, according to the specimen in Bishop ATTERBURY'S posthumous Sermons: this would insensibly, in the compass of three or four years, improve his knowledge to a high degree; give him a full view of the different methods of treating these subjects, and supply him with a store of proper sentiments, by the time he comes to compose, himself.

BUT whatever profit he may reap from the perusal of such Discourses, yet let him always bear in mind, that the richest treasures of practical wisdom and sound knowledge lie in the Holy Scriptures: from whence,

whence, as a Christian preacher, he is obliged to draw all the proofs of what he says upon any subject. These alone will furnish him with a noble stock of lively thoughts and sublime expressions; and therefore should make the chiefest part of a Clergyman's study and meditation.

Now in using the materials which he thus acquires, he should seriously consider, what instructions the people, to whom he ministers, will chiefly want, to correct and to improve them; what sort of expressions they will best understand, and be most usefully affected by. Then let him compose his Discourses accordingly; and bring them home as near as possible to their hearts and lives. For those Sermons will do them good which make an impression upon them: and the surest way to impress, is to be *particular*.—And there is the more necessity for this, as people in general are strangely slow to make the application to themselves. For further instructions on this head, I would refer our Divine to a book entitled,

Christian Eloquence in Theory and Practice,
Archbishop of CAMBRAY'S *Dialogues on*
Eloquence, and

Bishop BURNET'S *Pastoral Care*, chap. IX.

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IN the course of these studies, he should, lastly, be careful to assign a proper and special place to the business of *Reading*; that when he comes to perform the Offices of the Church, he may give them by his delivery all that propriety, life, and spirit, of which they are capable. This article of *Reading*, however neglected, is a matter of vast importance. For a right manner of performing the outward acts of religion, has a wonderful influence towards obtaining the inward effects of it on our hearts and consciences. And therefore, every one, who means effectually to benefit the church he serves, should labour to attain an habitual faculty of setting forth the *public service* to all its just and due advantage, by an audible, distinct, and properly varied elocution. But to read well and properly; to give every word and sentence its due poise; to lay the emphasis on proper places; and to adapt the tone to the sense and expression; it is absolutely necessary that the person who officiates should understand the meaning, and comprehend the force, of all that he reads. In order therefore to attain this knowledge, he would do well, in the beginning of his ministry, to read the *Lessons* in private first, calling in the aid of Commentators,

mentators, where he cannot otherwise vanquish the difficulties. And in regard to the *Liturgy*, let him read COMBER'S *Companion to the Temple*. This book, or the abridgment of it published afterwards in *Short Discourses on the whole Common Prayer*, I could heartily wish might be put into the hands of every Clergyman, when he is first admitted into *Deacon's Orders*. For then, if he were not strangely wanting to himself, he would be able, in a short time, to read the several *Offices* of the Church with a right spirit, good understanding, and lively devotion. WHEATLY'S *Illustration of the Common Prayer*, though more explanatory of the *ritual*, is yet very serviceable to the right understanding of the *devotional* parts.

I HAVE nothing more to add, but earnestly to request the young Student, that he would frequently read the *Office of Ordination* before he comes to be ordained: And not only read it, but seriously consider it; form resolutions suitable to what he finds required in it; and strengthen those resolutions by the fervent exercise of well-adapted devotions. This will beget in him such a
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serious turn and preparation of mind, as will make his *Orders* a blessing to himself, as well as himself a blessing to the Church. And whenever he finds, in the course of his ministry, that his zeal and vigour begin to abate, and give way to opposing temptations, let him instantly recur to the *Ordination Offices*, and review the obligations they fixed upon him. For the consideration of those promises, which we solemnly made at our entrance into *Orders*, is one of the most effectual motives to keep us steadfast to the duties of our function, and restrain us from running into wrong paths.

For proper directions in the *ministerial Office*, I must refer to Archbishop HORT's most excellent *Charge*, delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of *Tuam* in the year 1742.

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